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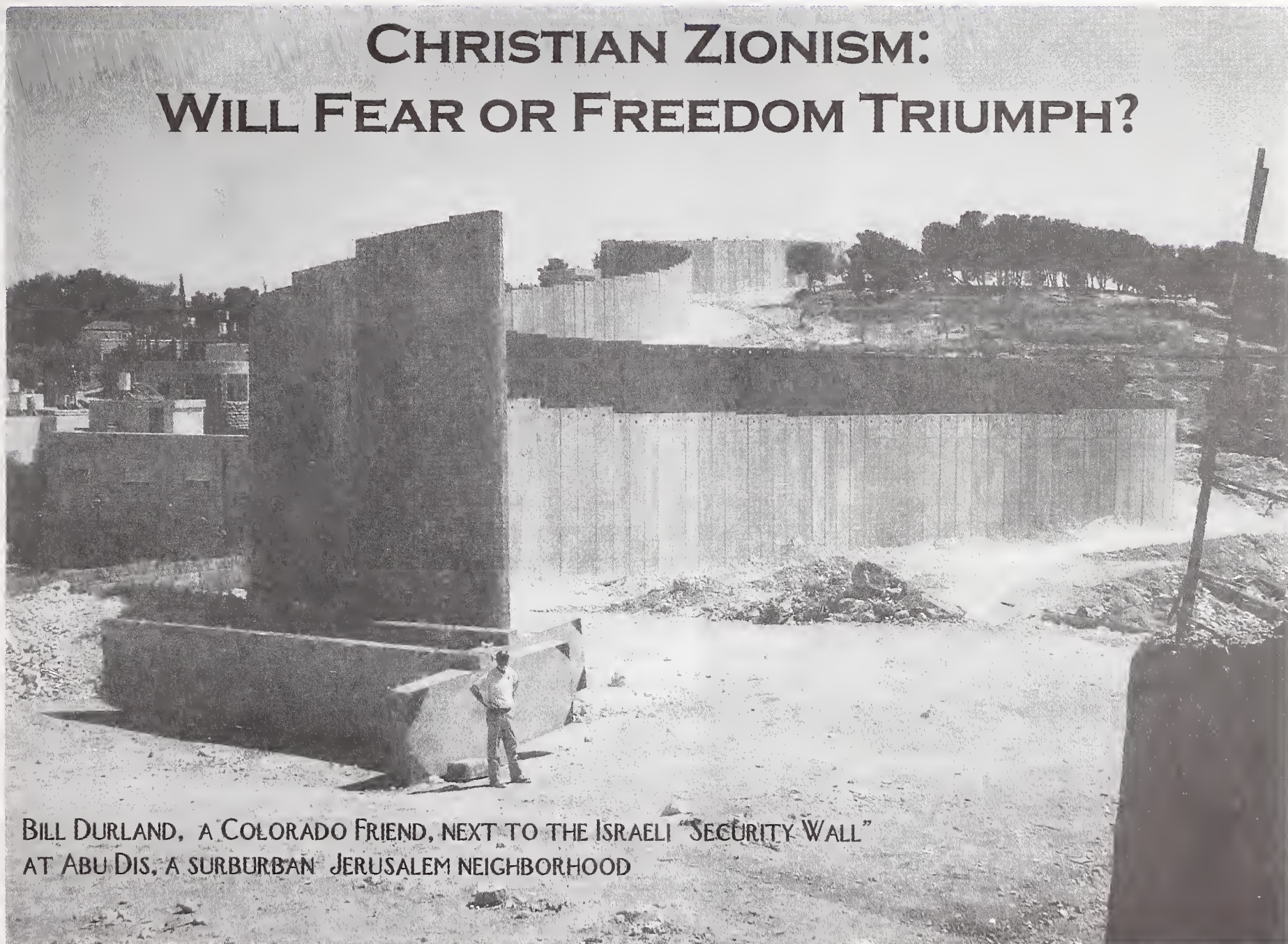
Friends Bulletin

Building
The Western
Quaker
Community
Since 1929

The Official Publication of Pacific, North Pacific
and Intermountain Yearly Meetings

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CHRISTIAN ZIONISM: WILL FEAR OR FREEDOM TRIUMPH?



BILL DURLAND, A COLORADO FRIEND, NEXT TO THE ISRAELI "SECURITY WALL"
AT ABU DIS, A SUBURBAN JERUSALEM NEIGHBORHOOD

Please return to:
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EDITORIAL

ON STRANGE BEDFELLOWS, JEWISH WOMEN WATCHING, AND THE REAL JESUS

Four years ago, I met a remarkable rabbi named Haim Dov Beliak at an interfaith gathering in Whittier, California. Rabbi Beliak told me of his efforts to oppose a Jewish "philanthropist" named Moskowitz who ran a bingo club in Hawaian Gardens, a poor, mostly Hispanic community near Whittier. Moskowitz used the lucrative proceeds of this club to fund violence-prone Israeli settlers and other right-wing groups (see <http://www.stopmoskowitz.com/militants.shtml>). During our conversation, I asked Rabbi Beliak what he thought of the strange coalition between conservative Israelis and conservative fundamentalist Christians.

In response, Rabbi Beliak pulled a condom out of his pocket and gave it to me. Attached to the condom was a post card from a feminist Jewish watchdog group called "Jewish Women Watching" (jewishwomenwatching.com). Titled "Strange Bedfellows," the card satirized the "strange partnerships between Jewish leaders and members of the Christian right."

Our feature writers, Bill and Genie Durland, attended a conference in Israel/Palestine that examined the theological roots of this bizarre partnership. According to Bill, those who are called "Christian Zionists" believe that by supporting the most reactionary elements in Israel, they are hastening the Second Coming when Jesus will whisk all true Christians off to heaven and make everyone else suffer hideous torments for failing to believe literally in the Bible's claims.

If Christian Zionists had their way, all Palestinians (aka Philistines) would be driven out of "Greater Israel," the Dome of the Rock (which has been a Muslim place of prayer for over 1,300 years) would be destroyed to rebuild the Temple of Solomon, and all hell would break loose in the Middle East. As far as these Christian Zionists are concerned, however, this conflict would be a very good thing: the sooner Armageddon happens, the better, since only then will Jesus return!

It would be easy to dismiss Christian Zionists as religious lunatics, but unfortunately, they number in the millions and are having an inordinate influence on America's Middle East policy. We therefore need to understand why Christian Zionists feel as they do and how we can respond appropriately to their distortion of biblical prophesy and revelation.

Bill and Genie are to be commended for making us aware of this and other developments in the Holy Land. Their work as "reservists" on Christian Peacemaker Teams reminds us what the "real Jesus" is all about.

As Sandy Perry notes in her article, the "real Jesus" preached equality and love and reached out to those who are oppressed and suffering.

When the "real Jesus" appeared to John Calvi, a Quaker healer featured in this issue, he says that "there were no words for how tender the presence was, no words for how beautiful the love was."

Having experienced this compassionate, peace-loving Jesus, I feel it is important to reclaim his revolutionary message of hope and grace, especially during these dark times, when some who claim to be "real Christians" are avidly supporting war, viciously attacking gays, lesbians, and Muslims, and showing utter disregard for Jesus' main concern: the poor, the oppressed, and the outcast.

Jesus' prophetic ministry helps us discern the difference between "real" and "false" religion, between the religion of love and the religion of fear.

Perhaps that's why I appreciate Jewish Women Watching and Rabbi Beliak. They are fearlessly exposing what's false and hypocritical in their faith community. We need Christians who care enough about their Christian faith to do the same. Historically, that's been one of the important jobs of Quakers.

Anthony Manousos

"TO LIVE IN THE PEACE"

A REPORT FROM JERUSALEM

BY GENIE DURLAND
COLORADO SPRINGS MEETING

Easter in Jerusalem was quiet. Good news? Perhaps, in light of the suffocating nature of the Israeli military occupation of Palestine and the frequency with which lethal violence breaks out in both Israel and the Palestinian Territories, a quiet day anywhere in the region should be welcome. But Easter in Jerusalem? Where are the throngs of pilgrims who used to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus in the place where it happened? The evaporation of tourism and pilgrimage is just one of the economic and cultural casualties of the annexation of East Jerusalem by Israel and the 37 years of Israel's military occupation of Palestinian lands.

Bill and I spent Easter in Jerusalem along with other members of our

Bill and Genie Durland are Reservists with Christian Peacemaker Teams. As part of their CPT service they have worked with the team in the West Bank three times and on a delegation to Iraq just prior to last year's invasion. This report is a reflection on their most recent return to the Palestinian Territories.



Salim Eid Al Hadalin—Photo by Durland

**OUR BEDOUIN FRIEND
PLANTED THE GREATEST
HOPE IN OUR HEARTS....**

**"I WANT OUR GOD TO
SEND PEACE, NOT JUST
HERE, BUT TO ALL THE
WORLD."**

Christian Peacemakers team in Hebron. There were many people on the streets, but no huge crowds. The churches were well attended but not crowded. When one remembers that the Christian population of Palestine, once nearly 10 percent, is now less than one percent, one is disappointed but not surprised.

That Easter Day in Jerusalem was a welcome respite from the tension and

difficulty of our work in Hebron. The night before we came up as far as Bethlehem and spent the night with our friends Sis and Jerry Levin. Jerry is a CPTer and Sis works for Holy Land Trust. After church and lunch in Jerusalem we returned to Hebron to resume our work.

The day after Easter we traveled with Abdelhadi Hantash of the Hebron District Land Defense Committee to visit an extended Bedouin family in the south Hebron hills. The contrast between the streets of Jerusalem and the sere, stark compound where this family ekes out a marginal living could not have been greater. They live on the edge of the Israeli settlement of Karmel, and south of the huge settlement of Gush Etzion. The elder of the clan, Salim Eid Al Hadalin, a warm and expressive man, spoke English well.

"The settlers are taking our land," he said, pointing to an acre that had been bulldozed and foundations for about ten houses laid. "They are building and building, but we may not build. We were building a latrine, but the army came with a stop work order. If we do not stop, they will bulldoze it. We may not make a permanent building."

This large extended family lives in a series of small concrete huts with no plumbing or basic amenities. The settlement which looms above them at the crest of the hill is clearly visible in all its detail—charming two-story villas with satellite dishes and solar panels on

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their roofs, American SUV's and minivans in the driveways, lush flowers and trees, which bespeak unlimited access to the water denied their Palestinian neighbors.

We sat on mats outside Salim's house, overlooked by this incongruous suburban enclave. We were served glasses of sweet mint tea and Salim told us his history and his dreams. His father bought this land in the 1950s from a Bedouin in Yatta. He was a small boy when they came to live there. "When I first came here," he said, "there was no one here, no persons, only little birds." When he was a child, his family lived in tents. Then, as a young man he built a small house. "Later, the Jewish settlers came, and they took much of our land by strength. I wanted to go to them and say 'this is my land,' but the soldiers shouted at us with very angry words. I wanted to say, 'Where is the justice? Who will make a judgment?'"

Who, indeed? This is not the State of Israel. We are well beyond the internationally recognized, legal boundaries and yet this land, legally owned and deeded to the Palestinian occupants is being whittled away, without recompense, to continually enlarge the Jewish settlements.

We sipped our tea, surrounded by smiling children, eager to have their pictures taken. Too soon it was time to leave. We walked down the rocky incline past a small field of barley, where a couple of donkeys grazed. Three little girls came running to the field and chased the donkeys back up the hill. As we approached the road with the tall wire fence running along the edge of the settlement, we wondered—"Where's the justice? Where's the judgment?"

Such visits are often part of our work as CPT team members. We make them to inform ourselves of the reality of the situation "on the ground" so that when we return home we can give accurate accounts of the impact of occupation, closure, economic strangulation and land confiscation on the lives of everyday Palestinians. We also make such visits so that we may, in some small way, feel connected with the poorest of the poor in this beleaguered land and in hopes that

our presence might help them to keep hope alive.

Our work with the team in Hebron this year was also highlighted by the opportunity to take part in "school patrols." The CPT apartments are located in the Old City of Hebron, an area honeycombed with Israeli settlements and military checkpoints, and characterized by flashpoint tensions. Because children walking to school each morning are often harassed by settlers, we go out in patrols of two to four people, wearing our distinctive red caps, to accompany the children and to watch the "hot spots," the places where trouble most often erupts. It is heart-stopping duty because of the irrepressible exuberance of the children in the face of unimaginable hardship.

We spent a little over a week working with the team in Hebron and then returned to Jerusalem to attend the 5th International Conference of Sabeel—the Palestinian Ecumenical Liberation Theology organization. This year's conference theme was "Challenging Christian Zionism, Theology, Politics and the Palestine-Israel Conflict." Nearly 600 people from 30 countries attended. Presenters were Christian, Jewish, and Muslim historians, theologians, and activists. Topics covered every aspect of Christian Zionism as it impacts the people and politics of the region as well as the prospects for peace.

When the conference was over, a continued program of "exposure" to various aspects of Palestinian and Israeli life was planned for those who remained to take part. Bill and I were asked to facilitate the first of these events—a trip to the farming village of Beit Ummar, halfway between Bethlehem and Hebron, where CPT works assisting farmers threatened by settlers. We escorted two busloads of people to Beit Ummar, including a 45-minute delay at the soldier-manned entrance to the village, where we waited while three Israeli soldiers called their superiors to find out whether they could allow us to enter. This sort of arbitrary detention occurs on a daily basis for local residents, so it seemed an appropriate experience for internationals seeking "exposure."

When we were finally allowed to enter the town, we brought the group to the municipality building where they were greeted by the Mayor and given information by local farmers about how two settlements—Harsina and Gush Etzion—have confiscated more and more of their land and how the settlers harass them and shoot at them when they try to work their land or harvest their crops.

A final trip to Ramallah to visit the Friends Schools and the Friends playschool in the Amari Refugee Camp marked the end of our time in Palestine. We came away feeling both deeply saddened and strangely hopeful. Saddened because the Palestinians seem more demoralized than ever. The construction of the so-called "security" wall, ripping up communities, dividing families, destroying livelihoods and confiscating huge chunks of Palestinian land is cementing the creation of an Apartheid situation. Hopeful because in spite of the cruel realities of their lives, so many of the people we talked with are able to retain hope and come up with amazingly creative actions of nonviolent resistance to the 37-year-old occupation.

Our Bedouin friend, Salim Eid Al Hadalin, planted the greatest hope in our hearts. He and his family will lose what's left of their land. We could see the path the wall will take when it is finished, and there will be nothing left for them when the settlements are enlarged and the wall completed. Yet Salim talked to us about his faith and his understanding of the goodness of God. He said, "Our God does not want people to be fighting. ... I want our God to send peace, not just here, but to all the world, for all the people. He likes from us that we help each other. Then the world becomes good." As we were leaving he said, "Live in the peace. That is the message from Moses, peace be upon him, and Jesus, peace be upon him, and Mohammed, peace be upon him. They all taught the people to live life in the peace—not in the fighting."

In the end this was the most profound message we received in Palestine, including all the erudition and scholarship presented at the Sabeel Conference. ▣

September 2004 FRIENDS BULLETIN

CHRISTIAN ZIONISM: WILL FEAR OR FREEDOM TRIUMPH?

BY BILL DURLAND
COLORADO SPRING MEETING

PART ONE: AN OVERVIEW OF THE
HISTORY, THEOLOGY AND POLITICS OF
CHRISTIAN ZIONISM

The age-old question of whether human beings have freedom of choice or are simply living out a predetermined plan of the universe in which we are pawns, plays a significant role in the current debate over the “end times” of this world and of ourselves. According to what theologians call “end times” or “eschatology” theologies, human existence as we have known it will culminate in a final judgment and eternal life in another dimension. How free we are to do God’s will or even how free God and Jesus are to act without certain predetermined events taking place is part of this theological mix, which is sometimes known as “apocalypticism” (after the Book of Revelation). Fear plays a major part in coercing people to believe in such a version of reality.

This essay criticizes this version of the end times. All three so-called “religions of the book,” Judaism, Christianity and Islam, have end times theologies and the interplay of them with history and politics in the Middle East,

BILL DURLAND is a Quaker, teacher and lawyer. He and his wife, Genie, recently spent three weeks in Israel and the Occupied Territories during which they attended a conference on Christian Zionism sponsored by Sabeel, The Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center of Palestine, committed to religious nonviolence. This was their fourth trip in as many years to the Middle East as part of Christian Peacemaker Teams, a pacifist/activist organization founded by Mennonites, Brethren and Quakers.

particularly in Israel, Palestine and Jerusalem, is crucial to their understanding.

I will focus on one Christian version, which is called Christian Zionism. Christian Zionists compose part, but not all, of the evangelical and fundamentalist wing of the Christian church. Pentecostal churches, in particular, dominate this view in America. The view antedates the more familiar Jewish Zionist movement by about 80 years. Emerging from British, Anglican and American denominations of so-called dispensationalists, and further narrowed to those dispensationalists holding a pre-millenarianist view, is Christian Zionism. Dispensationalism holds that there are several ages of God’s history. Each age is a dispensation from God. The ages are named after familiar Old Testament figures such as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and others. These ages are followed by the Christian or “church age” which culminates in the Messianic and a “New Heaven and New Earth” ages. Once again this version is further narrowed to belief in a pre-millenarian as opposed to a post-millenarian age which for Christian Zionists and others comes after a seven-year period of tribulation and before the coming of Jesus to usher in a 1,000-year peaceful reign by virtue of the temporary defeat and binding up of Satan. Thereafter Satan once again is released and permanently defeated so that the final judgment may take place and the eternal age of salvation begin.



In the Jewish Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem, an organization advertises its vision of rebuilding the Temple. —Photo by Durland.

Some dispensationalists and pre-millenarianists are also Christian Zionists who see God’s purposes for Jews (Israel) and Christians (“the church”) as separate entities. The former are God’s earthly people, the latter his heavenly ones. Some of these Christian Zionists take the position that the Jewish covenant is eternal and the Christian covenant a mere interlude in theological history and salvation. God’s chosen people, Promised Land and temple priesthood are to be blessed, restored and to exist eternally. Christian Zionists are further identified by their scriptural interpretation of absolutist literalism, a futuristic end times, and a restoration of Jews to Palestine in the present state of Israel, which will become the embodiment of God’s eternal salvation on earth.

Christian Zionists are divided over the emphasis placed on all of this. Some emphasize “defending and blessing Israel.” Others are occupied with the signs of the times, and a third group with “reaching Jews for Jesus.” What unites

them, however, and makes them different from other evangelicals, other millenarianists, and other dispensationalists who are not Christian Zionists, is their focus on the State of Israel and the need for Christians to give it their unconditional support as God's requirement of politicians and churchgoers.

How do these characteristics of Christian Zionism evoke images of freedom and fear? Steven Sizer's book entitled *Christian Zionism: Historical Roots, Theological Basis, and Political Consequences* is most helpful in this study and lists seven basic tenets that identify this "ism." These include:

1) an ultra-literal and futuristic hermeneutic of the Bible (i.e. interpretation),

2) a belief that the Jews remain God's chosen people,

3) an everlasting and unconditional covenant (i.e. agreement) with God which guarantees the Jews the right to always possess Palestine over its existing, indigenous population,

4) the justification of further possession of land stretching from the Nile in Egypt to the Euphrates in Iraq,

5) the possession of Jerusalem solely by Jews as their capital,

6) the re-building of the temple of Jerusalem with a priesthood and animal sacrifices replacing the Christian doctrine of Jesus' human sacrifice of himself for humanity, and

Christian Zionists, although not Jews or Israelis, believe that their own self interest depends on certain fearful events occurring, with certain dire consequences for some Jews, Christians, and innumerable others who have not been saved before the seven year period of tribulation begins. Christian Zionists see history and politics unfolding in a way that supports their eschatological predictions.

With the British support for the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, Jews returned in increasing numbers after 1923 to a land where the Jewish population had been almost completely depleted. In 1948 the independence of the Jews was declared

through the creation of the State of Israel in a war that confiscated Palestinian lands. Many Palestinians left their homeland or were placed in refugee camps that exist to this day. Having conquered what was 78 percent of Palestine, Israel occupied the rest in a 1967 pre-emptive strike. As a result, control over Jerusalem was restored. Subsequently Jerusalem became the capital of Israel. So the first three steps towards the culmination of the end times have already taken place: Jews have been restored to Israel; Jerusalem, in its entirety, became part of Israel in 1967 and subsequently became its capital. Next on

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the countdown list is the rebuilding of the temple with priests and sacrifice. Christian Zionists now want to force Israel to destroy the Islamic mosques on the site of the destroyed second temple so that the anti-Christ will then be able to join us, as the next major event. (No thought is given to preventing the anti-Christ from ever coming by not rebuilding the temple.) The anti-Christ will then desecrate the temple and the war of Armageddon will begin, after which the Messiah Jesus will then, and only then, have the ability to return in his second coming to conquer Satan, but only temporarily.

Where are the Christians when Jesus returns? Well, only the bad ones are here to greet him because, according to the Christian Zionists and other Christians, the sinless Christians will be saved just prior to the seven years of tribulation and will not suffer at all but will be whisked away in a "rapture" to meet Jesus "in the air." While they are

hanging in outer space, Jesus returns to earth. The remaining population of Christians, Jews and others must make a decision to accept Jesus or not. Those that do reign with Jesus in a thousand years of peace. After this Satan returns again and is finally disposed of. (Some Christian Zionists now believe in a new twist that all Jews, as God's chosen people, will inherit the earth as their kingdom without the need to accept Jesus as the Messiah, as Christians, an afterthought in this foreordained theological evolution, will be safely set aside in heaven.)

Peace does not figure into the present times for Christian Zionists. As a matter of fact, it is not desired, but should be avoided. What is fore-ordained is violence, war, destruction and death, except for those Christians who have been taken up in the rapture. Those Christians who are not today Christian Zionists must become so, now, to be saved. Those who do not, along with some Jews and others, will have been given a second chance to accept Jesus as their Messiah after the seven-year tribulation. If they don't, they will be disposed of in hell. So the ultimate message of Christian Zionism to Quakers and others is to give up your work for peace. It is not God's will. A conscientious commitment to nonviolence and pacifism only acts to obstruct and delay this plan and thus is anti-Christian and supportive of the anti-Christ. The "Prince of Peace" who proclaimed a message of love and reconciliation no longer is their Jesus.

So what choice does that leave Quakers and others? As Paul Harvey used to say, "and here is the rest of the story." Look for it in Part Two of this revelation in next month's *Friends Bulletin* unless you have been raptured away. If not, a choice remains for you and me. What will it be in this war between freedom or fear? This war is truly spiritual, not physical. Quakers call it the Lamb's War. The end times, called "the day of the Lord," are always our own times. Will freedom triumph over fear and will peace continue to be the true goal of Quakers, Christians and others of good will? ■

"HEALING AND GROWING IN THE LIGHT"

BY JOHN CALVI

PUTNEY (VERMONT) MEETING

The following is the second part of a keynote address called "Schlepping the Light," which John delivered at Intermountain Yearly Meeting on June 9, 2004. The first part, which can be found in Friends Bulletin, July 2004, describes Friends whose deep faith helps them to become "generators of Light." In this part of his talk, John talks about his work as a healer and how healing relates to "schlepping the Light." For more about John and his ministry as a Quaker healer, see www.johncalvi.com

My healing gift is the release of pain. I am an imperfect student of that gift. I am still learning after 22 years of surrendering to that gift. When I first began, I had very specific concrete ideas as to what I thought it might mean. I kept receiving messages from the Divine to go across the street to the Salvation Army and buy suitcases. I was slow to respond. I wanted more information. By and by, I went and bought a suitcase. I got another message to go and get another one and another one and another one until I had six suitcases. I am sitting in my little room without enough money to fill up the car with gas saying, "We're not going anywhere, are we? Are we going somewhere? Is this right?" My husband [Marshall Brewer] later told me that maybe it was a divine message just to get a grip. But after I had these suitcases for a while, I began to receive invitations to go around the country and teach, so I used those suitcases. I ended up with twenty suitcases that I used for traveling and teaching. The universe has a wonderful sense of humor, and we want to be open to that.

Something else that Friends are very clear in expressing is that insight feels good. It feels good to wonder and to come to a greater understanding, to come to a greater understanding of yourself, to come to a greater understanding of the



John Calvi offering a healing session at Intermountain YM

Divine, how we are all aspects of the Divine, how we are the breath and the fingers of the Divine and how easy it is to lose track of that idea.

One Friend was very clear in saying that it is very important to work with self-confidence over self-esteem. Her sense was that with self-esteem you are much too dependent on compliments and that makes you vulnerable to betrayal. But with self-confidence you have a clearer idea of what you are capable of doing with your work. This is the kind of understanding that comes from insight and wonder and taking time.

Sometimes I have difficulty with self-confidence in going about my work. Sometimes I am in a situation where if I say that I am a Quaker healer, people will close the door. I feel like a salesman with something that people don't want to buy.

Once upon a time I was up in Toronto with the Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Torture. Someone had sent a small introduction on my behalf and I stopped in to see the folks there. I explained that I was a massage therapist specializing in trauma and that I would like to make a gift of working on some

people while I was in town. They really hadn't considered alternative therapies at that point. This is in the late 80s. Since we were getting nowhere, I thought, "See if this scares them, tell them you're a Quaker healer." Well, that worked. They were edging me towards the door, all smiles. Then a phone call came from Nancy Pocock, one of the great Quaker ladies in Canadian Yearly Meeting, who is no longer with us. She was known to refugees from many countries as Mama Nancy. She said, "He's been working with refugees at my house. You know that woman from South America who's in such trouble? Why don't you let him work on her? She's there now, isn't she?" So they said, "Okay, you can work on this one woman, but we want to watch."

So here is this lovely young woman who really had seen things that I can't repeat. She wasn't sleeping, her speech made no sense, and she couldn't sit still. She had really gone off into a territory that we simply don't have language for.

I began to do energy work around her head. I could feel layers and layers of things that were not hers coming away, the room became peaceful, and she went

into a deep sleep. Then the two doctors looked at me and said, "Oh, you're a healer." And one of them came for work the next day.

The topic of spiritual experience was very large in our discussions. Friends felt very clear that it was important that there be exposure to events that draw us deep into the spirit. To hear vocal ministry, to experience a gathered meeting was priceless for deepening the spiritual life.

It is also important to feel how finite our minds are and to feel how infinite the spirit is, how words are insufficient for what we see and know and come to understand as regular. This learning needs to be experiential because it's not going to be what we think.

One Friend said, "Isn't it just impossible to explain to someone what a gathered meeting is, what a covered meeting is? There just are not words for that."

There was also a sense that as people grow in their reverence and in their familiarity with being with the Light, there is more reverence and prayer becomes less and less specific.

Rather than showing up with a demands list, there was a feeling as they grew in the Spirit that they would slowly come to feel the tone of reverence, come to feel the tone of the Divine, and sit next to it and let it envelop them, and not to be stuck in the idea of getting across a list of need and wants.

There was also comfort in ambiguity. We understand the divine in many ways, some of which are not even friends with one another. It might be that many of the ways that God is presented to us in our early life make less sense as we become adults and other ideas come to us later in adult life. Some of them are contradictory. It might be that there are some things that we believe and feel, but we aren't actually going to know until we get back home to "headquarters."

To be comfortable with that ambiguity, to be comfortable with the idea that there are concepts and ways of feeling and thinking that there is no language for and that there may not be a way to

decide what the nature of God is. We need to be patient with that ambiguity.

One Friend said to me that he spent most of his time outdoors because that's where he found meeting for worship to be most powerful. His understanding was that the highest place that a person could get to spiritually was to be in awe of creation. He felt that there's a very tidy design to the universe, and if you are in awe of creation, that will bring joy to your body and to your mind and you will have a sense of well being and can participate within creation in a way that's gentle and constructive.

Friends also talked about childhood visions and visitation as adults. Having visions, having a visit from the Spirit life, tends to be a private thing that people don't talk about very much. Another tendency is that people don't understand

**QUAKERISM IS A SOMATIC RELIGION.
IT IS A RELIGION THAT WE EXPERIENCE
THROUGH OUR BODIES.**

its meaning or become conscious of it until later on. That's very common. One woman told me that when she was in her 50s, she had taken a yoga class and gone to an ashram. She was chanting in Hindi and she got a very clear visitation from Jesus. While she was chanting she asked Jesus, "Do you mind if I am stepping out of Christianity to do this?" and Jesus replied, "No, I couldn't care less. I'm just glad you showed up."

Another Friend told me about a time when she had eye surgery back when eye surgery was done in very crude ways. After the surgery she had to lie in bed without moving her eyes for weeks. One night Jesus came to her very clearly and spoke three messages to her:

"Love ye one another. My grace is sufficient unto thee. Bear ye one another's burden."

She suddenly understood that no matter what happened to her, she had this action plan that she could live into for the rest of her life. She didn't have to worry about what the outcome would be.

She was filled with Light. She is one of these very special power generators. When you sit down next to her, you just feel better because she has no doubt about the nature of God. She has no doubt about her connection, and it's an ongoing thing that she can feel.

When Jesus came to me, I was very surprised. I was not expecting this. I was working with refugees who'd been tortured, women from El Salvador, the women of CoMadres. Jesus came in clear as a bell, there was no doubt about who he was. He guided the work and we were both stunned—such a lovely moment of grace. There were no words for how tender the presence was, no words for how beautiful the love was.

Friends spent a long time talking about the practice of spiritual life. Mostly they said you have to show up and let it work on you over a long time. It will accumulate in you gradually over time and accumulate in your body. This is one of the things that I particularly like about Quakerism. It is a somatic religion. It is a religion that we experience through our bodies.

We can feel our bodies change and be different as we center down into Meeting. There is a change in our breathing, there's a change in our posture, there's a change in the amount of tension we have and are holding in our bodies.

One Friend said that she was very grateful that she had found Quakers so that she could have a context for seeking in one specific way rather than to keep seeking for ways to seek. It meant that she could put time in one groove and make a home and polish that stone and make it shiny. It's very different from going from one thing to another.

Another Friend said that spiritual life has got to be habitual. You have to make it a habit of mind to be in contact with the Divine, to have mercy on yourself and other people, to respond compassionately. There has to be a decision somewhere along the way that you are choosing this and you are going to make it a regular practice.

Then there's clearly the idea of fidelity, which means you have to show

up on a regular basis. Don't just say you're going to do your spiritual life. Show up and do it. Get down into the quiet. Find the prayer that brings you deep and get there regularly.

There's also the idea of coming to Meeting for Worship with no expectations. Surrendering to the Light. Not trying to get something particular done. Not pushing. Not coming with a full agenda. Not making demands.

Some folks talked about having a Spiritual Friend, so that we have someone that we can talk to and make conscious our experience. Other folks talked about the importance of community, especially for grief and for celebration.

There's also the idea of having a role model, guide or mentor. Someone who can help you to see that there is greater depth to the experience than where we are currently, someone who welcomes your seeking, someone who has the deep calm or the hospitality for your seeking.

I remember when I first came to Quakers at 16 years old. The night before I'd gone to a university that was having a powwow. The Iroquois nation was having a dance and they were teaching the white folks how to do the dances. But there was this little white guy, sort of a little elfin fellow who knew all the words to all the songs and he already knew all the dances. The next day I went to Quaker meeting for the first time and there he was.

He was the clerk of meeting. He had spent his life as an anthropologist studying the Navajo. As we were sitting here in the quiet, he began to sing a Navajo song and to translate it into English:

"All the horses are coming to me. All these good things are coming to me: the white horses from the east, the blue from the south, the yellow from the west, and the black from the north. All these good things are on their way to me now."

He became my draft counselor and eventually became an old friend. He really became someone who schleps the Light.

It is wonderful to see someone further along than yourself and watch what they're doing carefully and see which part you understand and maybe have a feel for and which parts you don't have a clue about.

There was another topic that came up that was a surprise to me. Friends talked about betrayal as an event, a situation, that can help you deepen your spiritual life. Something extremely painful where your trust is broken, where there has been a trespass or abandonment. There was the feeling that when something is so painful that part of you dies, if you can still speak your truth, if you can maintain your integrity, betrayal will teach you that God is the only reality.

IN MY WORK, HEALING FROM TRAUMA IS SACRED LEARNING. CAN WE GATHER UP ALL OF OUR CALM AND ALL OF OUR COMPASSION, AND SIT DOWN NEXT TO THE MONSTER WITHOUT TRYING TO KILL THE MONSTER, WITHOUT BEING AFRAID, BUT HAVE A NICE CUP A TEA AND UNDERSTAND WHAT IT MEANS.

Examined troubles teach and failures teach. After trouble, we can learn better and deeper. After trouble, after grief, and after convalescence—sometimes illness feels like a betrayal of the body.

It might be that we have less fearlessness after convalescence or illness. It might be that we use that peaceful time to rest and to wonder. Convalescence might also be a preparation for moving on to a next plateau.

There was some laughter around the idea that we never seem to welcome trouble, but we do seem to learn what its uses are.

In my work, healing from trauma is sacred learning. Can we gather up all of our calm and all of our compassion, and sit down next to the monster without trying to kill the monster, without being afraid, but have a nice cup a tea and understand what it means.

One Friend said to me, only one, "I

have no experience in betrayal."

Now there are some obstacles to growing in the Light and becoming an old Quaker smoothie who schleps the Light.

One of the problems is that our culture is very busy and very noisy. It is violent, materialistic and dishonest. You really can't go too far in American popular culture without running into some of that. There is also a very large cultural push for us to be the same, for us to be similar to one another. You might want to watch for those obstacles and see how to sidestep them. Early Friends talked of being in the world but not of the world. Have we got ways that we separate ourselves?

When I was school teacher, I used to say to parents, "This summer put your television in the attic." When they did, they often found a wonderful comfort and release from popular culture. So we might take a look around our lives and see if there other things which we can set aside, things that have bright flashing lights, things that move much too quickly.

Which brings us to a topic that Friends are especially good at—eccentricity. It is my experience after this study that old Quaker smoothies who schlep the Light are a very peculiar bunch of folks. This is not unusual among Friends, as you know. Just look at you. What a bunch of characters. Some of you I could not bring home to meet Mom. It turns out that this eccentricity, this quality of being different from the usual, the expected, is absolutely vital. Sometimes in our spiritual life there is a tendency to keep it private, maybe because we think it's going to be embarrassing. As a result there is a great deal of spiritual experience which is unheard.

What I want to suggest to you is to consider enjoying your eccentricity, enjoying your difference. Become more of who you are, and don't bother to put your light under the bushel. Enjoy and grow within those qualities within yourself.

I just want to repeat that all of these qualities are not something I think that we should all strive for so that we all become these old Quaker power generators, that we all become Quakers who schlep the Light. This is a rare disorder. But I want you to be watching for it and be aware of it because it's very important to our spiritual life.

In this time when there is such war-mongering going on, and so much suffering and such waste of resources, it's absolutely vital that we find and hold on to our roots and stay close to the Light.

As for myself, I hope that I live and study long enough to become an old Quaker smoothie who schleps the Light. I would love that. But as I look at how many mistakes I make each day, and as I listen to my dear friend, who is 90, say "it takes a really long time to grow up," I am relieved that I have a long time to study and that nothing is going to happen quickly.

I am really honored to be with you this week and I very much appreciate that I have had three days to prepare this talk, to lay low and to rest. My gift of healing is one that I am still learning. There are times when I am no use to moving pain out of someone and there are times when I am of very good use.

I just want to mention that after lunch—I tend to get to lunch early because I don't like to stand in line forever—after lunch I'm going to hang around outside. If you have some physical and emotional pain that you would like some help with, please come sit with me and let's talk about what might be possible and if I can get my hands on you in a way that might be helpful. If you need some help and you see me sitting with someone please give us some privacy, but stick around and come along as way opens and as the chair opens.

One other thing—I know that I might be the first gay Italian Quaker

who knows how to yodel that you have invited to Yearly Meeting. I want to make a special request. We lose people each year. We lose gay teenagers each year. With the discussion of gay marriage coming up as a controversy and its being used by the radical right to change people's votes, I want to ask you, please, as you discuss this in your homes, in your Meetings, be tender in your deliberations. Gay teens are seven times more likely to commit suicide simply from the inhospitality of the world. If the entire topic is one that you're not comfortable with, I'd be glad to talk with you. But I ask you, as you discuss this topic in all of our venues, please do so with a tender heart. None of us here want to hurt our children. I myself was almost lost in that way. Thank God there was angelic intervention and I got to stick around. It's nice to be here.

Thank you for this day and for this life. Please help me to be ready for more. ▣

ALL TASKS ARE EQUAL— AND UNFINISHED

BY SUSAN NELSON
SAN DIEGO (CA) MEETING

One lifetime is an unfinished business, although some people seem to accomplish such a great deal that their efforts appear to be a completed project. But each of us carries on work that has been begun by our parents, our teachers, and, very often, by people we do not know at all. And each of us will leave work that is in various stages of completion that someone else will carry on when we are no longer here.

It is impossible for any of us to tell which of our projects or ambitions are important or critical; we cannot tell from our personal vantage point what kinds of foundations we have built for someone else. A job that we think of as the finishing touch may be the spark that blasts a cavern in the existing thought about a particular subject.

At the point that women earned the right to vote, were any of the suffragists imagining an Oprah Winfrey, a Jennifer Lopez or the astronaut, Ellen Ochoa? When the first mainframe computer was plugged in, did the builders dream of the Palm Pilot? Would Gutenberg be disappointed to know that as soon as he got the Bible distributed to every citizen, people began to vigorously question its contents?

I believe that it was the very conservative Senator Orrin Hatch from Utah who worked on the equal access laws that would allow groups of students to use public school facilities for religious meetings. This, in turn, opened the door for gay and lesbian teen groups to have the same access (at which point, the citizens of Utah decided they didn't need to use schools for religious meetings, after all). We cannot always calculate the ultimate outcomes of our actions.

As the summer draws to a close, many of us have a long list of unfinished projects. If we were to leave this world tomorrow, some of these would be picked up by others, and some would likely not draw the attention of our family and

friends. None of us knows what the future impact of our various activities might be. Henry van Etten, a French Friend, said that all tasks are "equal in the sight of God." It's a good reminder. I teach my students and my children to prioritize, but I notice that very often their priorities don't line up precisely with mine. If all tasks are equal, that shouldn't matter. Children come under frequent criticism for "wasting time" and for daydreaming. There is some little lauded research that indicates that the time children spend daydreaming is necessary for the development of both creativity and analytical thinking. Perhaps children are born knowing that all tasks are equal.

Sometimes I interpret van Etten's saying as a kind of "life is uncertain; eat dessert first" thinking. The other part of his quote is that Quakers must pick up those tasks that are "neglected by others." Within the limitations of our own circumstances, we must decide which of our many tasks to put first on our list or to bring to what we think of as completion. As I have gotten a *little* older, I am placing less emphasis on this selection process, as I do not ultimately get to decide

which work is most important. Someone not yet born, whom I may never meet, might decide that.

Even a long life does not guarantee any “finished products,” so as

summer comes to a close, I will not worry about the dozens of projects that I began so enthusiastically in June and are still in various stages of progress as Labor Day approaches.

All tasks are equal because they are continuous. We do not really begin or end them; we only do our small part in a never-ending and sometimes unknown-to-us process. ▣

A RETREAT AT QUAKER CENTER, OR WHY SILENCE IS LIKE FLUORIDE

BY ROBIN MOHR
SAN FRANCISCO (CA) MEETING



For the last six months, I have been planning a weekend retreat for my birthday—48 hours, all by myself, at a little cottage in the redwoods. When I told people about this retreat I was going to take, I kept saying, “For two whole days, I’m not going to brush anybody else’s teeth. Heck, I may not even brush my own teeth; I don’t know yet.” I reserved the cottage, weaned the baby, borrowed a car, and prayed my kids wouldn’t get sick. Still, up until 5:30 last Friday, I wasn’t entirely sure that it was really going to happen. But then I put my suitcase and groceries in the car and drove away. For real. Let me tell you, it was great.

I had expected that this retreat would be healing. I had a mental picture of myself with little pieces broken off all over and that this weekend I would have time to heal over. It was like I was a rotten tooth and the silence would be like fluoride.

You know that as we go about our regular business, eating and talking, etc, the enamel on our teeth gets little nicks and cracks. If we don’t take care of them, they can break completely. Fluoride somehow helps the tooth to remineralize the enamel and repair the damage that is a normal part of the life of a tooth. Dental professionals have found that we need to have not only a small daily application of fluoride, but also—every six months or so—a deeper, longer application of concentrated fluoride.

That’s what I think silence like. In our daily interactions, we bump into

people and things, we talk and relate, etc—maybe parents especially are prone to give little pieces of themselves away. And we get little nicks and cracks in our souls, our selves. It’s a normal part of being human. Little bits of us get broken or torn off and if we aren’t careful, we can end up looking like social or spiritual Swiss cheese. But a small daily dose of silence can help. I’ve seen that in the last six months. At the moments when I seemed in danger of totally cracking apart, I would just imagine myself at my retreat place and breathe, for maybe ten seconds, and it was enough. I could come back to my real life and go on coping with the normal chaos of my family life.

This weekend has been like a deep silence application. I feel remineralized, restored, as if all the little cracks and nicks and chips have been filled in and smoothed over. (Even though I still had to cook and clean!) I read books and walked in the woods. I ate cookies and drank tea and sang songs when I felt like it. One thing you learn in the woods: nature is never completely silent. The trees, the birds, the beetles are all making their little rustlings and chirpings. The silence I speak of is not something *out there*, it is something *inside of me*. When I am silent enough inside, I can hear the trees, hear God, hear my children speaking to me in so many different ways.

But this weekend I had time to be genuinely still. I stood at the center of the labyrinth and on the bridge over the creek and just looked and listened and

prayed. These are the moments of peace, of full present-moment awareness that will fill my 10-second retreats for the next long while. What a treat to say, “Here I am, Lord,” and just for the moment, not have to do anything.

At the same time, I realized how rusty I am at the discipline of solitary prayer. How hard it is to make myself sit still and turn to God for any length of time. Maybe a busy family life is just my excuse not to have to do this hard work. In any case, I am reminded of why Meeting for Worship is not just between me and God.

I’m not sure what the dental equivalent of a weekly Meeting for Worship is. But I do know that it is an important intermediate source of silence and sustenance, between the 10-second retreat and the weekend-long version. Every week I have the opportunity to sit with other people in silence, in a nurturing and caring community, along with God. To still myself and my noise long enough to hear God. And somehow, it’s easier to sustain in community.

Which brings me back to family life. At the end of my retreat, I am able to think quite fondly, but not anxiously, about my husband, my children, my friends. I feel whole and healthy enough to go back and touch them, listen to them, help them, without feeling like I am going to break completely apart. What a joyous gift of my first-ever, maybe soon-to-be-annual birthday retreat.

P.S. When I arrived at the cottage, I thought for a minute about how this retreat was mostly about taking care of myself, so I decided to go ahead and brush my own teeth.

Robin Mohr is a member of San Francisco (CA) Monthly Meeting and the mother of two boys, ages 2 and 6. She just turned 36. For more information about personal retreats at Ben Lomond Quaker Center in California, call 831-336-8333 or visit www.quakercenter.org.

THE REAL JESUS

BY SANDY PERRY
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

Who is Jesus? What does he want from us? The controversy over the Mel Gibson movie, "The Passion of the Christ," reminds us once again that history has given us not one, but rather two competing and antagonistic versions of Jesus.

The original, real Jesus is the savior of the Gospel who came to bring good news to the poor, to liberate the captives, and to heal the sick. He was born poor, preached to the poor, and ministered to the outcast and the destitute. "He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering." Yet his message was one of hope, justice, and liberation. The kingdom of God he prophesied was an earthly, cooperative community based on compassion and the sharing of wealth.

In the fourth century, however, Christianity was fundamentally changed. It became the official religion of the Roman Empire. Constantine transformed the cross from a symbol of popular empowerment into one of conquest and domination. Jesus became a defender of privilege instead of the prophet of the poor. All his teachings were turned upside down, taken out of context, distorted, and denied in his name.

The battle of the Bible has been raging ever since. It has reemerged at every turning point in Western history: the Protestant Reformation in Germany, the English Civil War, and the American Civil War. In moments of social upheaval, the original Jesus was resurrected and inspired the masses to do battle with the false Jesus who defended property, slavery, exploitation and violence. The real Jesus preached equality and love. Whenever he stepped forward, political revolution erupted and history advanced. Feudalism and monarchy were overthrown, democracy was established, slavery was abolished.



JESUS FEEDING THE MULTITUDE.

The argument over anti-Semitism in the Gibson movie stems from these historical conflicts. For political reasons, the Gospel tended to downplay the role of the Romans in the crucifixion of Christ and blame the Jewish leadership. The Gospels were not inherently anti-Semitic, because their writers were themselves Jewish. In the hands of the empire, however, these differences were made over into an evil doctrine designed to spread seeds of dissension.

For the sake of worldly power, the so-called "Christian" rulers of medieval Europe bowed down to the very Satan rejected by Jesus. To support their class rule and exploitation, they relied on crude anti-Semitism. Passion plays in particular

were occasions for organizing hatred and violence against the Jews. Centuries of this escalating bloodshed led ultimately to the horror of the Nazi holocaust, where six million Jews were systematically tortured and murdered in gas chambers—the modern equivalent of crucifixion. The so-called Christians became the executioners, and this was not a movie.

In the Americas the false Jesus was used to justify slavery and genocide against the indigenous peoples, and Africans were kidnapped and brought to the New World in chains. Columbus, Cortez, and the "rotten jackal" Valverde used the cross to instigate the slaughter and pillage of the native American

peoples. The real Jesus rose up again, however, in the slave rebellions and the abolitionist movement which resisted these horrors. The eighteenth century Quaker John Woolman helped unleash this movement by exposing the evil of the false religion. "I was then carried in spirit to the mines," he wrote, "where poor oppressed people were digging rich treasures for those called Christians, and heard them blaspheme the name of Christ, at which I was grieved, for his name to me was precious. Then I was informed that these heathens were told that those who oppressed them were followers of Christ, and they said amongst themselves, 'If Christ directed them to use us in this sort, then Christ is a cruel tyrant.'"

The tyrannical "Christ" continues to further its agenda today with racial, religious, sexual, and class hatred. While some of the most evil forms of class oppression have been removed, economic exploitation in the form of global capitalism remains. We are now once again at an historical turning point—some even say that we are in the end times. Today's technological revolution is destroying the world as we know it.

While automation can and should be used to end poverty, it is instead creating off-shoring, unemployment, and widening destitution. Our system of private profit and distribution is no longer compatible with hi-tech means of production.

The real impact of Mel Gibson's movie will depend on the response of the viewers. Many of us may commit or recommit our lives to Jesus, but when we do that we must ensure that we understand his true message. America's church today is polarized and riddled with false prophets who defend empire and exploitation of the poor. The Bible instructs us not to believe every spirit, but to test the spirits to see whether they are from God. "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of

my Father who is in heaven," Jesus said.

The will of the Father is justice. "Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter - when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?" Modern capitalism promotes a rampant individualism that contravenes justice, disobeys the Gospel, and denies that we are our brother's keeper. It promotes the idea that material prosperity and spiritual



salvation are merely personal endeavors independent of our social, economic, and political relationships. Nothing could be further from the real Jesus of the Gospel.

As Martin Luther King, Jr. pointed out, all life is interrelated and we are all tied into a single garment of destiny. The fundamental spiritual and moral issue of the day is the unity of the poor and our solidarity with them. Capitalism attacks this solidarity by spreading the lie that poor people are somehow individually responsible for the systemic failure to provide affordable housing, jobs, and single payer universal health care.

The false prophets deny that Jesus said, "Blessed are you who are poor." They deny that he said, "Woe to the rich." They deny that he said that you cannot serve both God and money. They deny that "the love of money is the root all evil" (1 Timothy). They deny the very

golden rule that we should treat others the way we ourselves wish to be treated, and love our neighbor as ourselves.

In the parable of the sheep and the goats, Jesus separates out the good and the evil on the basis of how they treat the hungry, the homeless, the sick, and the persecuted. He even goes further: he personally identifies himself directly with the poor. God has chosen them to be rich in faith and to inherit his kingdom. How we treat them is an exact measure of our attitude toward the Lord of the universe.

Today Jesus is present where the tears stream down the faces of those whose loved ones have been senselessly shot down by police. He is in the hearts of parents and children unjustly ripped apart by a punitive child welfare system. He is in the souls of homeless families shivering in our streets. Until we act to end these injustices, the sufferings of Jesus are in vain. Until we act, we allow the false prophets to continue to dishonor and mar his spirit as surely as the Roman torturers disfigured his body. The fate of our souls, our society, and human history depends on the choices we make today. Will we move forward toward the cooperative kingdom of the real Jesus—or backward into the evil one's world of fear and isolation? □



Sandy Perry with Andrea Villaseñor-Perry (left). This article originally appeared in the March 2004 issue of the

People's Tribune, a national political monthly published in Chicago (see <www.lrna.org>). After being a member of San Jose Meeting for many years, Sandy recently resigned to join the First Christian Church, which has been very involved with homeless activism, one of Sandy's deep concerns. Nonetheless, writes Sandy, "Quakers will always hold a place in my heart.... This is not the end of our relationship, just another stage in our growth."

“NOT AS SURVIVORS”:

A REPORT ON THE 5TH PACIFIC NORTHWEST QUAKER WOMEN’S THEOLOGY CONFERENCE

BY MARGE ABBOTT
MULTNOMAH MEETING
(PORTLAND, OR)

A young woman told her story of incest and abuse, yet as she told it, she was clear that she does not tell it as either a victim or a “survivor”—this experience no longer defines her life. Those initial steps were crucial: learning she was a victim of someone else’s actions and not to blame, then recognizing she had survived the abuse and could create a new life. Now she is stepping forward, acting with new freedom and strength, and accepting with delight the possibilities before her. This woman was speaking as one who is now actively listening for the voice of the Light in her inner being and responding to the call which is echoing within her. A clear sense of her ministry in the world is gradually emerging.

This is an important message for me, from the various women’s conferences which have been held over the past decade and more: God calls us to live into attentiveness to all that is holy with a fresh eye, with vibrancy, and with strength—a strength that recognizes the fear and pain that we have known, but is neither defined nor confined by them when it is grounded in the Spirit. We gather for both affirmation and challenge. We push each other to listen more deeply for the Inward Teacher. We share our fears and stumblings, and we seek to support each other on our journeys.

Over 50 women gathered June 3-6 at Menucha Retreat Center in Corbett, Oregon for the 5th PNW Quaker Women’s Theology Conference. This conference brings together women from North Pacific, Northwest and Canadian yearly meetings to tell stories of the Spirit at work in our lives and learn from those

“Greetings from the 2004 Pacific Northwest Women’s Theology Conference, held June 3-6, 2004, at the Menucha Retreat Center, Corbet, Oregon.

“This biennial conference is the fifth in a series which has grown from the work of women who met at other Quaker gatherings and found common interest across many Friends traditions.

“This year we found great peace waiting for us as we drove under the green canopy above the Menucha entrance. Weighty discussions, deep sharing, worship and presentations were mingled with walks among the trees, swimming, knitting, making hand-bound journals, singing, three types of Bible study, and sitting with new and old Friends. We worshipped both out of the silence and through word and music.”

who sometimes seem alien in their beliefs or practices.

I think it is safe to say that all the women who have participated in these conferences over the years have been changed by the experience. Sometimes it is simply seeing others as individuals rather than stereotypes. No one from North Pacific Yearly Meeting has stood and declared they have been “saved,” but references to Jesus come more easily and many of us have had to revisit our reactions to Christianity. While those of us from unprogrammed meetings have had to address any fears we had about being evangelized, women from Friends Churches have gotten to know lesbians as individuals and heard their stories.

This year an extended Bible study by Peggy Parsons gave all of us tools to consider for ourselves and, if occasion arises, speak to others about the biblical passages which are too often used to condemn homosexuals. We applied some of the basics of sound biblical

interpretation which can apply to any passage or issue as well as specific information on the text and context of key

passages. Genesis 18 and 19 (Sodom and Gomorrah) is not focused on homosexuality but rather about violations of hospitality interpreted by Jesus in Matthew 10 and Luke 10. Elsewhere in the Bible, the “sin of Sodom” is defined by terms such as injustice, pride, and false prophecy, never homosexuality. Leviticus 18 and 19 are concerned with ritual purity—telling the Jewish people not to “mix” things, be they types of fiber in cloth, or the ways of men and women. I Corinthians 6 is probably a letter addressing particular problems in

Corinth rather than a general teaching epistle and in the translation from the Greek, there is much ambiguity in the words used. The first chapter of Romans is a broader teaching epistle, but its main focus is the prohibition against idolatry. While no agreement exists on definitive interpretation of these passages (and my summary does little justice to a two-hour presentation), when we don’t focus attention on a few words or even a few verses of Scripture, but understand the whole story which is being told in the context of the culture of the time and the complications of translation, new ways of seeing old prohibitions can arise.

As one of several people who have been involved in these conferences since they began, I am aware of the changes within myself. I have come to really appreciate skilled biblical interpretation which opens up these ancient Scriptures and makes them come alive. I am no longer threatened by evangelism and am

learning to distinguish healthy ways we can encourage the work of the Spirit in others from ways which do violence to the soul. Fear is all too prevalent in this world and many forces are magnifying it

—from pressure to prohibit gays and lesbians from marrying to the “war” against terrorism which has distorted US policy in so many appalling ways. I cherish experiences such as this Conference, which

call me to live in that Life and Power which takes away the occasion for fear, war, and hatred and helps me to experience the strength and grace which the Eternal offers all of us. □

IS ABORTION IN KEEPING WITH OUR QUAKER TESTIMONIES?

BY STUART BANISTER

EUGENE, OR

Although I have always thought of the unborn child as a real human being, I am not sure that this is my main objection to the practice of abortion. As I recall the arguments of John Woolman against slavery, his concern was as much for the condition of the slave owner as for the slave. As horrific as it seems to pull the unborn from the womb amidst its cries and pain (whether we view it as human or otherwise, it suffers), I am experiencing a growing awareness that this behavior holds within it the seeds of violence. As we find this practice easier to defend, we grow increasingly insensitive and ultimately nourish an environment in which suffering, death, aggression, and warfare are acceptable.

In reading Woolman’s Journal, I have been struck by his intense sensitivity towards destruction and pain inflicted upon the least of creatures, even the ruination of bird nests, caused much remorse. Mother birds risk their lives to defend their unborn eggs. I find it hard to imagine that those engaged in the cessation of a prospective bundle of love, especially where mutilation and suffering

result, do not inflict damage to the Light in themselves.

As I have reflected upon the arguments and reasoning of those in favor of abortion, I recognize that another aspect of walking in the Light is at risk, which also inevitably sows the seeds of violence. In some cases, abortion is defended on the grounds that the mother’s rights are the ultimate priority and that a baby is an interference in the life of the mother. Possibly our society is so far removed from the criteria for walking in the Light that it is oblivious to one of the most important necessities of that walk: the denial and crucifixion of self, especially as it relates to the subject of placing consideration and concern for others above that of ourselves.

It is this very argument that is used to justify war. For what other reason do we find that one human being murders another? It takes place at that point in which a person decides that his or her own life and needs are of greater importance than those of someone else, whether they be those of nation, an individual adult or an unborn baby. The motivation behind such behaviors quenches the Spirit that leads on a path of unselfishness. Just

as Friends often found themselves persecuted for their faith because they chose to take a difficult stand for what they believed was right, mothers may find that the choice to honor the life of another, albeit their own child, is a sacrifice for what is right that they must make.

To regard our own pleasures, our own time, our own career and/or our own finances above the life, the beginning or the existence of a baby fails to recognize what constitute the truest riches in life and from whence they come. The foundation for war is based on our attempt to satisfy our personal ambitions, our cravings, or to make our own lives easier.

To promote the cause of peace while likewise promoting the violence contained in abortion is a dichotomy that is hard to fathom. In this, Gandhi was consistent; he despised abortion. “What leads to war?...Do they not arise from desires ...you are jealous and covet ...so you become murderers ...you are unable to obtain contentment ...so you kill” (James 4:1-2). □

Stuart Bannister is a Conservative Friend who runs a business called “Me and Thee Buggy Shop” in Eugene, Oregon.

A FALSE SENSE OF UNITY IN BUSINESS MEETING?

The following report by Mountain View (CO) Meeting’s Worship and Ministry Committee describes a problem—coming to a “false” sense of unity—that other Meetings may have also experienced. The Committee’s report is preceded by the following quotation which provides a context for “coming to unity”:

Because coming to a sense of the meeting involves the way Quakers make decisions, it is easy to assume

that its purpose is to make decisions. And since its purpose seems to be to make decisions unanimously and since Quakers are not very good at instructing one another, it is easy to call it consensus. The purpose of consensus is to produce a product. It is aimed at a decision. The pursuit of the sense of the meeting involves nurturing a process which is completed when God’s recognizable presence settles over us in silence.—

Barry Morley, *Beyond Consensus: Salvaging Sense of the Meeting*, Pendle Hill Pamphlet # 307, p. 11.

[The Worship and Ministry Committee], along with the clerk [of Meeting], were concerned that, in making decisions, the Meeting often arrived at a false sense of unity. The Meeting would revisit decisions that had been made. People who had not been present when a decision was made did not trust the

process. Others who *had* been present felt that the decision did not have any claim on them.

Worship and Ministry brought a minute to the Meeting for Business, asking it to state that Business Meeting is a space where those gathered may discern way forward by listening to the Divine. We were not sure that this historical understanding of our process was actually held by the Meeting as a whole, and we were glad when the minute was approved. We made a number of basic suggestions about the process the Meeting follows—simple things, such as asking people to wait to speak until recognized by the clerk and to stand when speaking. We asked that committee reports and requests for action by the Meeting be prepared in advance and presented to the clerk in good time, so that a reasonable agenda could be prepared. All of these were supported by the Meeting.

Worship and Ministry is now struggling with the much more difficult problem of coming to unity. Mountain

View is not in any crisis, but we are concerned that the Meeting relies on a sort of surface like-mindedness as the basis for action, rather than deep conviction or unity. We see a number of problems.

When making a decision, the meeting is easily swayed by emotional appeals. This may be due to a cultivated habit of avoiding conflict (“well, it’s really important to them, they must have thought about it, and besides, it really doesn’t affect me—I guess I’ll go along”). This engenders a lack of trust in the process and in the outcomes. Without experience in conflict, people learn not to speak, for fear that any conflict will harm relationships. If they do have concerns, people believe they won’t be heard. Of course, if an emotional appeal works for one person—if the only way to be heard is make that appeal—then we begin to debate and to make multiple, repetitive statements about the issue at hand, instead of trusting the meeting to hold the issue in the Light, and to let each illumination add to its

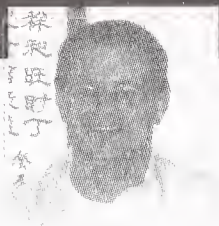
understanding.

Of a slightly different order is the urgent appeal. Because we are not well-practiced in reaching unity, the first temptation is to make a decision right now because the next Monthly Meeting will be too late. This presents two conflicting temptations—first, to make provisional decisions: we’ll do it if certain conditions are met, but the meeting doesn’t have time to verify them.

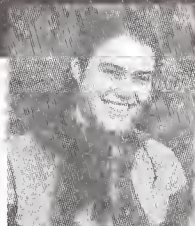
The second temptation is to not decide at all, and by the next monthly meeting we won’t have to worry about it. In the first case, we hand our name over to individuals in the meeting. This is problematic not because these people are untrustworthy, but because it often fits into the “going along because it doesn’t affect me” category.

In the second case, delay allows us to ignore the issues that kept us from reaching unity in the first place. These are often larger issues than the urgent case at hand. We aren’t very good at bringing hidden issues to the surface, although if we are listening, we can hear them in the underbrush.

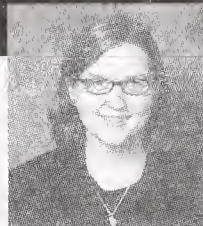
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STIPENDS AVERAGE AROUND \$3,000. LEADERSHIP NOMINATIONS ARE NOW OPEN [FROM INDIVIDUAL FRIENDS, MEETINGS, AND ORGANIZATIONS] AND MUST BE RECEIVED BY JANUARY 15TH, 2005. CONTACT ALLEN BOWMAN, COORDINATOR, WILLIAM PENN UNIV., OSKALOOSA, IA 52577. PHONE: 641-673-4190 OR E-MAIL <ABMB4190@KDSI.NET> OR GO TO WWW.QUAKER.ORG/PICKETTFUND.

There are always questions to answer: If there's a cost, what is it and where does it fit in the budget? We are beginning to run into issues where action may affect our corporate status. What is the risk, and is it worth it? What alternatives have been considered? What are the consequences of inaction? What are the

unintended consequences? Then there is the problem of preparation. It is easy not to think about meeting concerns from one meeting for business to the next. This is especially true if issues are not fully formed, are poorly presented, or expire.

The meeting for business is our way of acting in the world. It can be a source of

strength and community. We must practice, however—practice listening, practice speaking truthfully, practice openness in conflict with a willingness to be changed, practice waiting for the Light. The product of the meeting for business is not a decision—it is the sense of the Meeting, the sense of us meeting together. ▣

NEWS OF FRIENDS

BELLINGHAM FRIENDS MEETING WITNESS FOR PEACE

Margie White writes: "Bellingham Friends Meeting has been very supportive of the peace movement here, helping to create the Whatcom County Peace and Justice Center, attending the weekly peace vigil (Fridays 4-5 PM), and participating in local actions, such as this picketing of the local recruitment center" (see picture on right).

SAN JOSE FRIEND RUNS FOR CITY COUNCIL

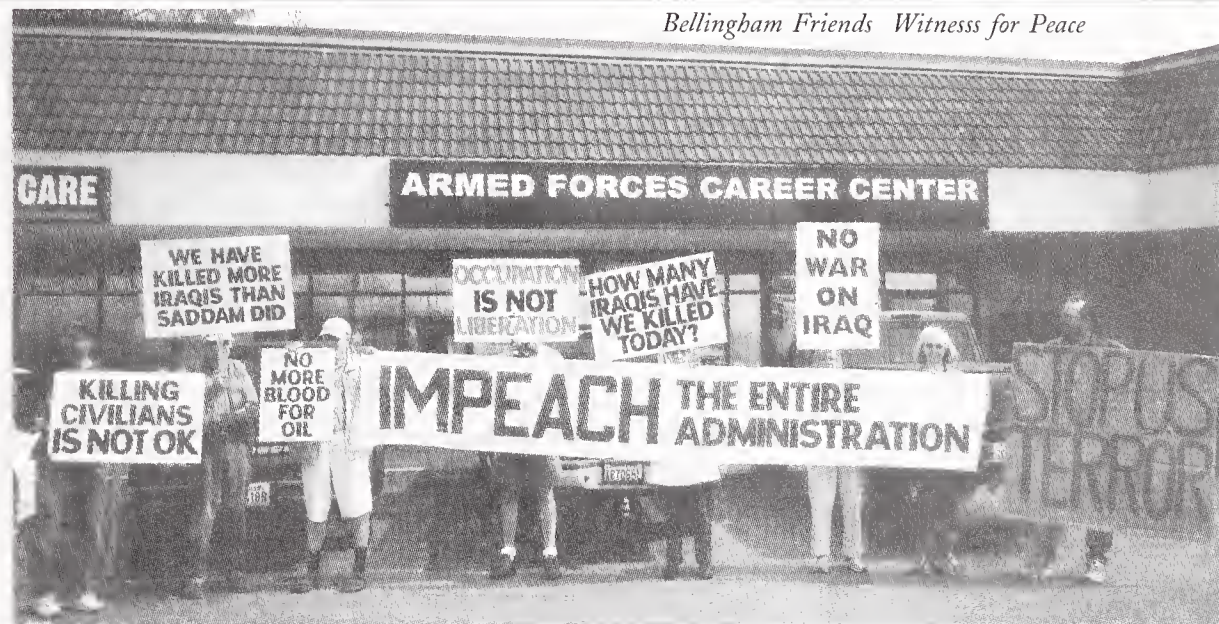
Jamie McLeod, an active member of the San Jose Friends (CA) Meeting who served as co-clerk from 2003-2004, is running for City Council.

According to her website (<http://jamiemcleod.org>), Jamie has worked for many years with refugee and immigrant communities. As Director of the International Rescue Committee in San Jose, she focused on economic development issues, including self-sufficiency, affordable housing, healthcare and education.

She has helped build bridges between neighbors and families as a volunteer for Santa Clara County Dispute Resolution Program.

THE WOOLMAN SEMESTER AT SIERRA FRIENDS CENTER PRESENTS ITS FIRST GRADUATES!

On May 22, 2004, Friends, family and friends gathered on a gentle slope of the lawn at Sierra Friends Center in the
September 2004 FRIENDS BULLETIN



foothills of Northern California to celebrate the completion of the first Woolman Semester, a sixteen-week curricular journey focused on peace, justice, sustainability, and service. The Woolman Semester joins a growing number of institutions across the country that focus on giving motivated teens an



Mandy Janoo

opportunity to challenge themselves in a college-like setting prior to graduating from high school.

Located in Nevada City, California, the Woolman Semester's mission is to achieve Quaker ideals of peace and justice through learning and service. Four rigorous academic courses, a two-week

service trip to Mexico and a week-long wilderness trip yield a full semester of high school credit and 120 hours of community service. This semester culminated with a presentation by each student summing up the experience of exploring peace, justice and sustainable living in the Woolman Semester

Mandy Janoo, from Vermont, stated: "One of the main themes of the Woolman Semester is peace. We focused a lot of our time on looking at what this word meant to us. The final result came in the definition that peace is the result of love and all the aspects that love holds. I have experienced love at this place; this is my home now and forever, in the truest definition of the word."

Colin Bussiere-Nichols, a Young Friend from Maine, related his Woolman Semester experience saying, "Consuming disproportionately to the availability of resources is violence against nature and those who are in need.... Looking within myself I see a disparity of integrity again. In the face of that knowledge, I have not acted to the extent that I should. I do not live my values. Yet. I speak like this because I have had an experience at Woolman that bore such a powerful witness upon me that I fear the impact of

"Sierra Semester," continued on page 20

BOOK REVIEWS

A Quaker in the Zendo by Steve Smith (Pendle Hill #370). Review by Joann Taylor, Santa Monica (CA) Meeting.

I resonated with Steve Smith's reflections on the importance of Zen Buddhism to his Quaker practice. In his introduction Steve writes:

At a time of my life when I had drifted far from my Quaker origins, I found the disciple of Zen meditation to be clarifying, healing, and liberating....Within the earliest records of Quakerism, in the writings of George Fox and other early Friends, I find—to my wonder and delight—remarkably explicit spiritual guidelines that are often diluted or obscured in contemporary unprogrammed Friends worship.

While reading this pamphlet, I felt how much Steve's thoughts were also mine, though I had never known nor had I talked with him about them.

I reread the last half of this pamphlet in a prayerful mode called *Lectio Divina*. It was enriching for me to have my "quiet time" focused on the ministry that Steve gives in this pamphlet. The excerpts from early Friends that he draws upon were reminders that I need to hear, to savor and to incorporate into my actions. These early Friends reminded me of the importance of giving myself an opportunity to unite with something bigger than myself. Sitting in the silence is one of those occasions in which I take time to be alone with God and with the mystifying Beyond.

I spoke to several Friends in my Santa Monica Meeting about *Quaker in the Zendo*. We found ourselves at one with Steve's message—that going through the stillness was descriptive of our mystic path to purification, to God. I not only ordered more *Zendo* pamphlets from Pendle Hill, I also rushed to the bookstore to buy a couple of books that Steve cited, such as Charlotte Joko Beck's *Everyday Zen: Love and Work* (with an introduction by Steve Smith) and Robert Kennedy's

Zen Spirit, Christian Spirit: The Place of Zen in Christian Life.

I find that my spiritual growth needs feeding from sources outside myself on a regular basis. These sources are my reminder of the power of the quiet in my life, that in the stillness I find my ever-present inward guide and I re-awaken to truth.

I can only respond with gratitude to Steve for his openness and the spirituality which he shares in *Zendo*. ▣

Tangents: Poems of Travel, a chapbook by Judy Ray, 2033 E. 10th St. Tucson AZ 85719. Review by Phyllis Hoge, Albuquerque (NM) Meeting.

The sixteen poems which comprise this attractively designed chapbook bear out the descriptive subtitle, "Poems of Travel," yet in half of the poems another theme runs under the other one—childhood. Once I had identified that, I understood better the quality of freshness responsible for some of the most clearly apprehended images.

In the first poem, the poet remembers how, as a child, seeing on a map the pink clusters which marked out boundaries of empire, she expected rosy granite and almond blossoms in the colonies she visited. In the second poem are remembered the wonders at all the various foreign places where a traveling child awakened during the first year of life. In the third, knocking about with her daughter in an old van (like a snail with his house on his back), the poet contrasts her steadily more discouraging impressions of their mode of travel with her daughter's cheerful response about her own happy experience. This refreshing and unexpectedly childlike perception recurs now and again in later poems.

The arrangement of the poems is felicitous, the poems easily slipping together, one often picking up in some way on the poem which came before. The inhale and exhale, the coming and leaving in "Immigration," for example, is paralleled in the next poem by the pendulum swing between enemies and neighbors of "Refugees," another poem in which children appear. Of course,

poems echo other poems constantly in this little collection.

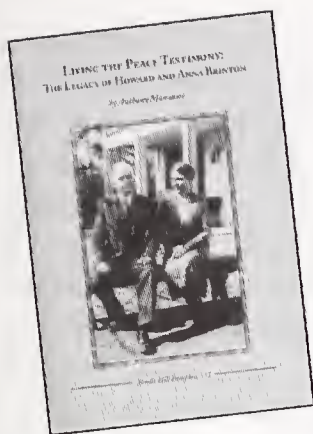
Especially this happens in the last poem, "Summer Promises," which evokes the familiar feeling of wanting to go back to a place we've responded to briefly and strongly, even going so far as to working out how to arrange a possible return. As to "Tangents," I feel as the poet felt in Bellagio, in Crete, in one dream place after another, "We'll come back here... We'll come back." ▣

The Just War: An American Reflection on the Morality of War in Our Time, Peter. S. Temes. Ivan R. Dee: Chicago, 2003. Hardcover: \$25.00. A review by Phyllis Hoge, Albuquerque (NM) Meeting.

If I had my way, I would insist on Temes' book as required reading for all of us because of how intelligently and felicitously it addresses our Peace Testimony without ever using the word "Quaker."

For once, the dust jacket blurbs do thorough justice to the material within. Temes, unquestionably and thank goodness, "a master of the simple declarative sentence," cuts through the baloney to offer a brief, persuasive and lucid presentation of the philosophies which try to explain and justify "the good war." He begins with the tribe and works through the history of views both religious and political—Cicero, Clausewitz, Kant, Hegel, Augustine, Aquinas and Pope John Paul II. He even brings in Abe Lincoln, Bill Clinton, and the two Bushes. Sounds impossible, almost incomprehensible, to cover all that reasoning successfully, but Temes writes so clearly that his narrative is at once plain and fascinating.

He concludes with three principles: "A Just War sanctifies human life and treats all life as equally precious.... A Just War is...about the future, not the past.... A Just War preserves and strengthens the principle of individual rights." He even finds an imperative reason for us: "The protestor serves a vital function for every party to war." Find out why. Read *The Just War*. This is easily the best serious book on a serious matter that I've read in a decade. ▣



THE FOLLOWING PUBLICATIONS BY WESTERN FRIENDS CAN NOW BE ORDERED THROUGH *FRIENDS BULLETIN*.

Living the Peace Testimony: The Legacy of Howard and Anna Brinton (2004), Pendle Hill Pamphlet #372, by Anthony Manousos, Santa Monica, CA, Friend. "The Brintons lived the Peace Testimony as writers, as activists (particularly with the American Friends Service Committee), and as directors of Pendle Hill during its earliest years. Howard's writings are integral to an understanding of the Quaker peace movement of the twentieth century and are no less relevant today, as Friends continue to seek the balance between outward social activism and their inward spiritual life." \$4.00 (plus \$2.000 postage and handling).

Meditations on the Prayer of St. Francis (2003), Pendle Hill Pamphlet #369, by Ann Curo, San Diego (CA) Friend. "Starting with the metaphor of the self as a musical instrument on which God performs, the author reflects on the beloved prayer of St. Francis as instructions for a life of Christian peacemaking. She uses examples from her experiences in homeless activism and her study of various faith traditions to explore the wisdom in the prayer line by line." \$4.00 (plus \$2.00 postage and handling).

A Quaker in the Zendo (2004), Pendle Hill Pamphlet #370, by Steve Smith, Claremont (CA) Friend. "At a time of my life when I had drifted from my Quaker origins, I found the discipline of Zen meditation clarifying, healing, and liberating. Curiously, this Asian spiritual practice has led me back to the Society of Friends: the more I practice Zen, the more thoroughly Quaker I become.... Within the earliest records of Quakerism, the writings of George Fox and other early Friends, I find to my wonder and delight remarkably explicit guidelines for spiritual practice that are often diluted or obscured in contemporary unprogrammed Friends worship." \$4.00 (plus \$2.00 postage and handling).

Compassionate Listening and other writings by Gene Hoffman, Quaker Peacemaker and Mystic. Friends Bulletin Publications, 2003. "For more than half a century, Gene Hoffman—through her essays and poetry, her workshops and speeches, her travels and her witness—has been a fountainhead of creative spirituality and courageous peacemaking. This book will be a rich resource for those who come after her." —Richard

Deats, Editor of *Fellowship Magazine*. Paperbound, 350 pp. with photos and index. \$16.95 (plus \$3 postage and handling).

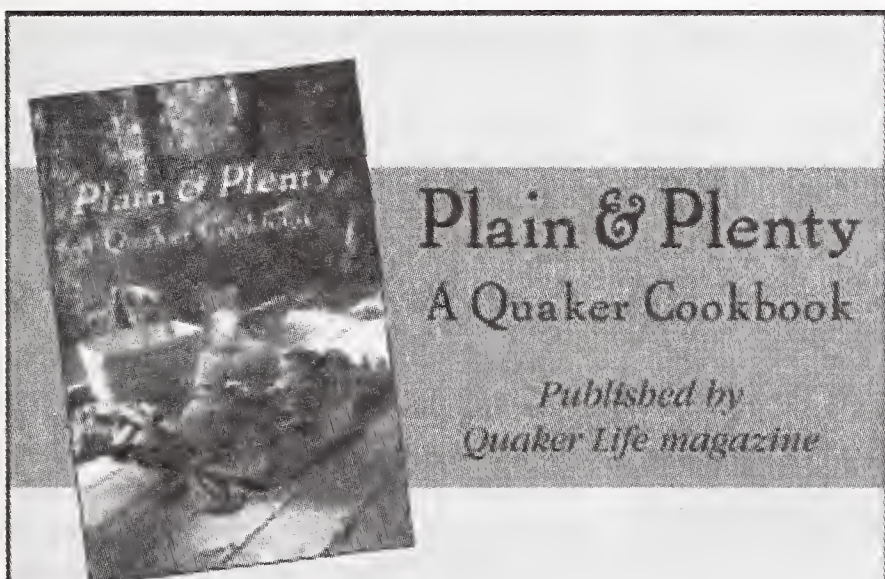


Quaker Peace Testimony in Times of Terrorism, Friends Bulletin Pamphlet #2 (2003) by Robert Griswold, Mt View, CO, Meeting. Reflections upon the spiritual basis for Friends' peacemaking efforts during this time of "perpetual war for perpetual peace." Ideal for study groups. Single copy: \$3.95. Two or more: \$3 each (incl. postage & handling).

Islam from a Quaker Perspective, Friends Bulletin Pamphlet #1 (2003). After September 11, 2001, Anthony Manousos (Santa Monica, CA, Meeting) fasted during Ramadan to become better acquainted with the Muslim community and the practice of Islam. This pamphlet explores the spirituality of fasting, examines the Islamic faith in relation to Friends' testimonies and provides a brief overview of Quaker involvement in the Middle East. Single copy: \$3.95. Two or more: \$3 each (incl. postage & handling).

A Western Quaker Reader, Writings by and about Independent Quakers in the Western United States. Friends Bulletin Publications, 2000. First historical work about Western Quakerism written from the viewpoint of Independent Friends provides vivid, first-person testimonies by Friends involved in the "reinvention" of Quakerism in the Western USA from the 1930s to the present. 354 pp. paper. \$19.95 (incl. postage and handling).

To order, check off items you want on this page, and send with check made out to "Friends Bulletin" to: 3223 Danaha St, Torrance CA 90505. FREE POSTAGE with orders of \$35 or more worth of Friends Bulletin publications (not including Pendle Hill pamphlets).



Plain & Plenty A Quaker Cookbook

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"Sierra Semester," continued from p.17

not changing. Though standing in opposition to the common patterns of change, I fear more the hypocrisy and lives that my consumption endangers until I have changed. My process has begun.....Last night I read the words "work is love made visible" from Kahlil Gibran's *The Prophet*. I then revisited our truth, discovered here at Woolman, Peace is the result of love. Upon contemplation the two were united: Peace is the result of work done in love. Looking at my life now, how can I help but work."

Mandy concluded by saying, "I learned of all the aspects of love, how when love is shown, peace does exist. This place has given me more hope in the world than any other, it has had struggles and triumphs, but most importantly this place has people who have somehow taught each other daily with their personal strengths. Woolman is an example of peace."

Paul Lacey, Chair of the AFSC National Board, graced us with his presence and summed the semester up beautifully with his keynote address. He spoke of several qualities valued by this community as he drew upon the Robert Frost poem, "There are Roughly Zones." We got a sense of what it might have been like being a student of this man, who taught English at Earlham College for 40 years. Paul still enjoys the opportunity to teach. Connection, roots, and the nature of pushing the limits of gray zones in our lives were explored with the audience. As Paul shared these themes, he acknowledged the difficulty of endlessly seeking what is right for us.

The Woolman Semester values the importance in the struggle of seeking. With the support of a community grounded in Quaker practice, we ask questions with no clear-cut answers and push the limits of those gray zones as we explore peace, justice and sustainable living. As each semester brings us a new group of Woolman Semester students, we begin again on an intensive 16-week exploration of Friends Testimonies as we do our best to put our Quaker faith into practice. ■

COLORADO SPRINGS FRIENDS MEETING NEEDS YOUR HELP

Colorado Springs Friends Meeting wishes to buy its own meeting house after 30 years of renting, and we need your help. We are a small but strong Meeting. We look forward to having a more visible presence in Colorado Springs, a city that is both a military center and a conservative religious center. From other western Meetings, we have learned that having a meeting house will help us grow both in size and in spirit.

Our fundraising goal is \$50,000, and we have \$42,000 yet to go. We ask Friends to help us raise the rest. We plan to buy a space in an office building in partnership with one of our members, an attorney who will share all the costs. The Meeting, however, needs to raise its portion of a down payment and a prudent reserve fund. We welcome donations of any size, and all are tax deductible. Please make out checks to Colorado Springs Friends Meeting, designating them for the Building Fund, and send them to: Colorado Springs Friends Meeting, PO Box 2514, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80901. If you have questions, please feel free to call 719-685-5548 for more information.

In the Light, Molly Wingate

MEMORIAL MINUTES

Martha Fort

La Jolla (CA) Monthly Meeting reports the death of our beloved Friend, Martha Fort, on February 17, 2004. Martha was born on June 12, 1908, in Monongahela, Pennsylvania, and spent her childhood in Charleston, West Virginia. She earned a bachelor's degree in Political Science from Oberlin College and a graduate degree in Psychiatric Social Work from the University of Pittsburgh. While she was at Oberlin she helped found a student peace organization which launched her life of service in the areas of social action and peace.

Martha's career as a social worker began with numerous WPA projects in Ohio, Kentucky and Florida. She also worked for the Red Cross, the Veterans Administration in Florida and Pennsylvania, and Pittsburgh's Family and Children's Service. As a single parent, after her eight-year marriage ended in divorce, she raised her two daughters while working full-time and participating in various community activities. It was in Pittsburgh that she first embraced the Quaker faith and became active in Quaker peace issues which revolved around America's escalating conflict in Vietnam.

In 1963 she moved to California. She first supervised graduate students and taught at the University of California at Berkeley and then moved to Sacramento where she supervised graduate students in their field placement for Sacramento State University. In 1967 she traveled to Vietnam with a rehabilitation team of the American Friends Service Committee. Their hospital in Quang Ni was bombed during the Tet offensive and the team was evacuated. In the following years she returned twice more to Vietnam where she worked to establish growth and development norms for Vietnamese children. This project was her response to the thousands of children orphaned without record of birth, age, or health status. Her work was published in a British medical journal. Profoundly moved by her first-hand experience of the horror of war, she dedicated the rest of her life to peace activism and conflict resolution.

Martha joined the faculty of San Diego State University in 1968 and remained there until her retirement in 1975. While at SDSU she was one of the founders of the Peace Resource Center. She was active with many NASW projects, League of Women Voter issues, as well as many Quaker activities. After retirement she spent two years in Geneva, Switzerland producing and editing the newsletter for Women's International League of Peace and Freedom. She also volunteered as a teacher at a School of Social Work in Rhodesia during the civil war in that country in the late 1970s. Her interest in the peace movement and in alternative community constructs led her to spend time with various communes and communities in France, Switzerland and the British Isles.

In the early 1980s she worked with Central American refugees who were detained in camps along the Southwest

border. She traveled extensively in Mexico, living in Mexico City, San Miguel de Allende and Hermosillo. While there she studied Spanish and became fluent enough to address, in Spanish, a UN meeting in Mexico City. She traveled to Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Columbia, observing first hand the civil war there and working with refugees imprisoned in southern Mexico. She also spent time in Guatemala as a bodyguard with the Peace Brigade. She worked to preserve the indigenous languages of the Guatemalan Indians by developing their oral language into a written one. She had the peace book, *One Hundred Monkeys*, published with her Spanish translation.

In 1986 Martha returned to San Diego and turned her attentions to numerous local projects. She was instrumental in the restoration of the trees at Chollas Lake Reservoir. She participated with Pro Esteros on border issues and worked to save the wetlands. She worked assiduously to secure affordable housing in San Diego by participating on the Mayor's taskforce on affordable housing and representing Friends Meeting on the Board of Interfaith Housing Foundation. She also organized resident committees at the various Interfaith Housing projects.

Martha was also active with the United Nations Association. She attended International Women's Conferences in Mexico, Africa, and Beijing. She was active with the National Association of Social Workers, Women's International League of Peace and Freedom, League of Woman Voters, Audubon Society, Sierra Club, and Grandmothers for Peace. She received many honors from the community, such as Peacemaker of the Year and Social Worker of the Year.

Martha brought her vast knowledge about peace and social concerns to Friends and educated us about the issues and possible solutions. Her presentations were comprehensive and well thought out and gave broad viewpoints. In pursuit of her interests, Martha exhibited a tireless energy and spirit that lasted well into her 90's.

In her later years she was also able to slow down enough to appreciate the wonders of nature, the ecstasies of opera, the beauty of art and architecture. On her 90th birthday she packed a tent and camp stove and traveled solo up the coast from San Diego to Oregon, spending almost 2 months exploring alternative ways people develop community

as she visited communes, religious centers and friends.

In the winter of 1999 she moved to Sacramento to live, first with her daughter Elizabeth and then at Aegis of Carmichael, an assisted living home. Both Sacramento and Davis Monthly Meetings were enriched by her participation in Meeting for Worship. The projects she was working on at the time of her death were establishing a chair at Oberlin College for the beloved Doctor Jaszi and recording a history of her life. She is survived by her two daughters: Eloise Piper of San Diego and Elizabeth Hattin of Sacramento, and five grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Martha's life as a Friend reflects the fruits of a faithful spirit. Her work as a tireless peace advocate opened her heart to a deep understanding and compassion not only for her own frailties but also for the frailties of others. Her messages in Meeting for Worship were simple, inspirational and loving. We celebrate a life well lived; and though we miss her active presence, her legacy lives on among us. ■

Toussaint L'Overture Jennings

Toussaint was born May 8, 1914, in Thompson, Georgia, and was named for the great hero of the Haitian Revolution. He had an older brother and two sisters. When he was a few months old, his mother died and his father moved the family to Augusta, Georgia. When Toussaint was three, his father remarried and his half-sister was born. That marriage ended in divorce and the family moved to Elsinore, California. When Toussaint was 12, his father married Elizabeth Elmore, who was a devoted mother to the children until her death in 1947.

The family moved to Los Angeles where Toussaint finished high school. At that time, his father moved him into the local YMCA. Toussaint remained active in the Y for the rest of his life, sometimes serving as a member of the board of directors.

He served in the United States Army from October 1940 to October 1941. After that, he worked as a railroad porter and traveled the United States, which gave him a life-long love for travel. He then went to work for the US Postal Service and retired as a Foreman Mails Supervisor after 35 years. He became an active member of the Bowen Methodist Church and especially enjoyed

singing in the choir.

In 1949, he married Mary Beth Washington. They met through Hedy Hubbe, a longtime member of Orange Grove Meeting. Mary had two sons—Santee (also known as Mike) and Eddie—and they thought of Toussaint as a father, even after he and Mary Beth divorced. Mary Beth had been an admirer of Stuart Innerst and become a Quaker. When Mary Beth was appointed Resident Friend at Orange Grove, the family lived in the caretaker's apartment. As he helped maintain the property and taught Mary Beth's boys to help him, Toussaint gradually became involved in Orange Grove Friends Meeting. He became a member in 1963. He was famous for saying, "Other people talk, but Quakers do." Somehow he remained active at Orange Grove and at Bowen Methodist without either of the two being aware of the other.

Family was one of the most important parts of Toussaint's life. A nephew says, he was "All about family." He had many nephews and nieces; and he would visit one family after another. He was a considerate guest, never dropping in unannounced, but sending a telegram beforehand and arriving with his own sleeping bag. Once there, he would take the whole family out to the International House of Pancakes for dinner. He would share news from the last family he had visited and thus held the whole family together.

He especially enjoyed the children. He remembered all their birthdays and exposed them to culture: theater, opera and museums. He would gather the children all together for afternoon outings or extended vacations, singing camp songs all the way. His nephew Ron remembers Toussaint teaching him to drive on the Pasadena Freeway. He took the older children from Pacific Ackworth School on field trips and always took a special interest in children whose families were troubled. His family says that although he was dependable, he was a bit of a loner, never talking about himself. Nor did he ask personal questions, he simply observed.

In his later years, he became more active at Orange Grove. He served on various committees, especially Oversight, and was a regular at workdays. He was our only African American member for decades. We had a Christmas tradition of Toussaint leading us in the spiritual, "Amen."

After retirement, he sometimes lived with his sister in Pasadena, and could be

counted on to attend meetings for worship and business. He seldom spoke in meeting but when he did it was simple and to the point. He was fond of quoting his grandmother who said, "What you're doing speaks so loud, I can't hear what you're saying." He seemed to know everyone and always had a bright smile, a cheerful greeting, sometimes a little joke, and a spiffy vest.

Toussaint lived to be 89. He died peacefully on September 6, 2003. In his last years, he had to live at the Eisenhower Nursing Facility because of failing health. A few members of Orange Grove and many members of his family visited regularly. On his last birthday, we sang spirituals together and his face was alive with the Spirit.

Amen, Toussaint. We miss you. ▣

FRIENDLY RESPONSE

INITIATIVE TO HELP MENTALLY ILL

Dear Friends, I am excited and hopeful about one of the initiatives on the November 2nd ballot. It is the one to help people with serious mental illness. The budget crunch causing Yolo county to cut its Department of Mental Health by almost 25% in 2004-05. That is a drastic cut for people suffering from schizophrenia, manic-depression, schizo-affective disorder, depression, and other forms of the illness. It will put many sick people on the street without proper care and medication.

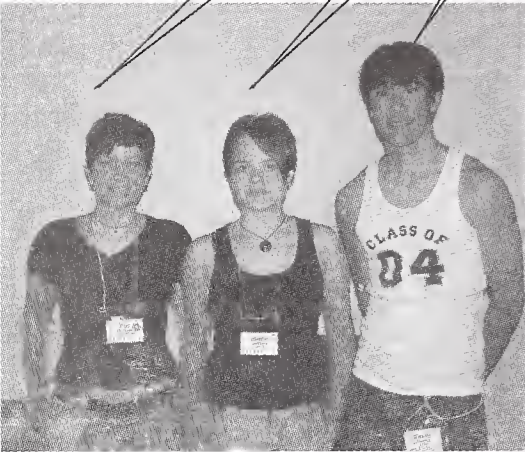
Assemblyman Darrell Steinberg, a caring legislator from Sacramento county, had a creative idea to help solve the problem. He suggested an initiative, Proposition 63, to tax millionaires a 1% tax on taxable income over the first million. There are many millionaires in California so approximately \$700 would result, which would be divided among the 58 counties. It is time we had a steady source of funding for each county Department of Mental Health to help care for the people living with serious mental illness. These people suffer terribly when not helped.

Proposition 63 (the Mental Health Service Act) would fund outreach, counseling, medical care, short and long-term housing, prescription drugs, vocational

training and self-help, and social rehabilitation.

Let's work together and pass Proposition 63!—Pat Williams, Davis (CA) Meeting.

**We're
registered to vote.
Are you?**



Xoe Huffman, Janine Carmona, and Xavier Manalo are 18-year-old Young Friends who registered to vote for the first time. They are keenly concerned about their future and the future of our country.

Let's show our concern as Friends by voting for the candidates of our choice.

You can register or update your registration information at: <http://www.fcni.org> and click **VOTE 2004**

A CALL TO CALIFORNIA ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE (AVP)/HELP INCREASE THE PEACE (HIPP) FACILITATORS. If you have been trained as an AVP/HIPP facilitator, your services are needed to help build an AVP presence in California. All too often facilitators are trained and contact is lost with them. This is an effort to find facilitators and give them a chance to tap into the larger AVP community and put those skills to use. **The First California AVP Fall Gathering is happening Saturday, October 23, 8:30 a.m.— 5 p.m., on the Central Coast/San Luis Obispo.** The program features discussion

CLASSIFIEDS

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Friends Journal has published "Quaker Thought and Life Today" for nearly 50 years, succeeding periodicals that date from the 19th century. Learn more about Quaker concerns and activities through this monthly magazine. Save 42 percent off the cover price. Receive 12 issues (one full year) for only \$35. Contact: *Friends Journal*, Dept. FB, 1216 Arch Street, 2A, Philadelphia, PA 19107. <Info@friendsjournal.org>.

topics of participants' choosing, plus new exercises, working with the prison, filling community workshops and how Californians can work together. Also part of the program will be planning for 2005 AVP/USA Annual Conference to be held in Northern California on Memorial Day next year. A special add-on to the gathering is a dinner Friday night with Rigoberta Menchu, Guatemalan Nobel Peace Prize recipient, organized by other groups in San Luis Obispo. For more information, contact Pat Hardy at AVPpat@earthlink.net.

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FRIENDS HOUSE IS A MULTILEVEL RETIREMENT COMMUNITY offering independent living apartments and houses, an assisted care living facility, skilled nursing, and an adult day services program serving residents and the wider Santa Rosa, CA community. Located in Santa Rosa, Friends House is easily accessible to San Francisco, the Pacific Coast, redwood forests, and the vineyards of Sonoma and Napa counties. Friends House is owned and operated by Friends Association of Services for the Elderly (FASE), a California not-for-profit corporation. The facility and Board of Directors are strongly influenced by Quaker traditions. The welfare and growth of persons within an environment which stresses independence is highly valued. Tour Friends House at our website at www.friendshouse.org. Friends House, 684 Benicia Drive, Santa Rosa, CA 95409. 707-538-0152.

WELLSPRINGS FRIENDS SCHOOL: alternative, accredited high school grades 9-12. Rooted in the Quaker Spirit of simplicity, community, nonviolence, honoring the Light in every person. Open enrollment. Climate of affirmation. 3590 W. 18th Avenue, Eugene, OR 97402. 541-686-1223. FAX: 541-687-1493. Dennis Hoerner, Head.

ACCOMMODATIONS: William Penn House, Washington, DC. Quaker Seminars, youth programs, bed and breakfast. 5 blocks from the Capitol, Supreme Court and near Smithsonian Museums. Shared accommodations for indi-

viduals and groups. Gays, lesbians and people of color are welcome. 515 East Capitol St. SE, Washington, DC 20003, 202-543-5560, FAX 202-543-3814, director@wmpennhouse.org, www.Quaker.org/penn-house.

POSITIONS OPEN: Interns: 9-12 month commitment. Assist with hospitality and seminar planning at William Penn House. Room & board with small stipend. Applications from gays, lesbians and people of color are welcome. 5 blocks from the Capitol, Supreme Court and near the Smithsonian Museums. See contact info above.

When travelling to the Pacific Northwest, consider the simple and economical travelers' rooms at **QUAKER HOUSE IN SEATTLE (WA)**. For reservations call Megan Snyder-Camp at 206-632-9839 or e-mail: quakerhouse.sea@juno.com.

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QUAKER WRITERS, EDITORS, AND PUBLISHERS. ARE INVITED TO JOIN QUIP (QUAKERS UNITING IN PUBLISHING). An international "self help" organization of theologically diverse Friends concerned with the ministry of the written word. Contact Graham Garner at grahamG@fgcquaker.org website www.quaker.org/quip.

FRIENDS PLANNING TO MOVE CAN REQUEST ASSISTANCE FROM DAVID BROWN, A QUAKER REALTOR. David will refer you to a real estate professional to assist you with buying and/or selling a home anywhere in the USA. E-mail: Davidhbrown@mindspring.com.



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Quaker Faith and Practice

October 8–10

Inquirers' Weekend: Basic Quakerism

Co-sponsored with Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
with *Michael Wajda and Mary Ellen Chijioke*

October 22–24

Conscience and War

Sponsored by the Pendle Hill Peace Network
with *Rosa Packard and Jim Hamilton*

November 7–12

Friends' Testimonies

with *Chel Avery*

November 19–21

Clerking

with *Arthur Larrabee*

Spiritual Life and Religious Study

October 17–22

Spirit-led Community: Early Christians and Early Friends

with *Timothy Peat*

and also with *Timothy Peat*:

October 22–24

Understanding John's Gospel

October 29–31

Chanting: Songs of the Soul

with *Beverly Shepard*

October 31–November 5

The Spiritual Wisdom of Meister Eckhart and Catherine of Siena

with *Donald Goergen*

November 12–14

Centering Prayer

with *Chris Ravndal*

Living Your Faith

October 24–29

Earth and the Sacred

with *Mark I. Wallace*

November 14–19

Nonviolence in Personal and Political Life

with *Dan Snyder*

December 3–5

100 Things to Do Before You Hit 100

with *Kendall Dudley*



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